

**WSDOT Ferries Division Assistant Secretary David Moseley's Weekly Update  
March 14, 2008**

Dear Colleagues,

In keeping with my introductory report last week, here is the second of my weekly reports to our staff, colleagues and stakeholders. I welcome your suggestions or comments on how we can improve this new effort to share information.

**A. Effect of the transportation budget on the Ferries Division**

Maintenance and Operations

The 2008 Supplemental Transportation Budget provides a total of \$14.7 million in new additional funding for the Operating Program. The major funding increases are for fuel, one-time funding related to the electronic fare system, and funding related to make-up service for the Steel Electrics. The primary reductions are for reduced PEBB premiums and saving from vacancies. There are two policy items in the operating program: a requirement for additional service this spring/summer on the Port Townsend/Keystone route, and a requirement that allows two drivers to use fare media for multiple discounted vehicle trips.

Construction

The 2008 Supplemental Transportation Budget provides for adjustments in project funding for the Ferries Construction Program. The legislative project list includes \$283 million in funding for up to three 144-auto ferries (service planned by November 2010). It also provides \$84.5 million to construct three new smaller vessels, with one vessel based on the *Steilacoom II* (planned service date of May 2009) and two vessels modeled after the Island Home (planned service in June and December 2010); and an additional \$15 million in funding for rebuilding the *Hyak*. Biennial funding includes \$13.1 million to cover emergency repairs already incurred for the Steel Electrics and *Rhododendron*, and reductions of \$4.4 million from capital program vacancies and on-site consultants. Ferries is required to maintain capital staffing levels at or below the level at January 1, 2008.

**B. Meetings with legislators**

This week I had an opportunity to meet with Senators Haugen and Spanel and Rep. Clibborn. Sen. Haugen and Rep. Clibborn are the Chairs of the Senate and House Transportation Committees. These meetings are very helpful in hearing issues and concerns regarding WSDOT's Ferries Division and learning the priorities of legislators. Over the coming weeks I will be meeting with many other legislators, particularly those from ferry-served areas.

**C. JTC activities**

Our planning department gave a briefing to legislative staff on Wednesday, March 12, reviewing the current information on vehicle level-of-service strategies and ridership forecasts. These are just a couple of pieces of the information we're providing to assist the JTC and Transportation Commission in various studies they are conducting prior to the 2009 legislative session.

**D. Visit to San Juan County**

On Wednesday, March 12, I had the pleasure of visiting with San Juan County

Council members and citizens. The meeting was very helpful in learning of issues particular to San Juan County, which is uniquely dependent on ferries. During this visit I was also able to visit with staff and talk with several of our customers. It was a lovely day in the San Juans and I very much appreciate the opportunity to learn more about ferry issues affecting San Juan County.

**E. Biodiesel test continues**

This week we began the testing phase of the biodiesel demonstration project. A five percent blend of soy biodiesel and 95 percent ultra low sulfur diesel was loaded on the *Issaquah*, which is running on the Fauntleroy/Vashon/Southworth route. You probably saw one of the many positive media reports we received on this issue over the past week. As the demonstration progresses, we'll increase the percentage of biodiesel in the blend, up to 20 percent. The testing phase is set to run until next February.

It's been a busy week with many valuable discussions. Let's continue the dialogue – don't hesitate to let me know your ideas and suggestions.

David